

In the claims:

All of the claims standing for examination are reproduced below with appropriate status indication.

1. (Previously presented) In a network including a communication center and a plurality of clients using communication devices, a system enabling agents of the communication center to best communicate with the clients and client devices, including configuring call-back options and preferences, the system comprising:

customer presence software executing at each client device for monitoring client and client device status; and

a communication-center presence software executing in the communication center for receiving information from the customer presence software;

characterized in that the customer presence software monitors real-time client and client device status at each client device including on-line/off-line status of the client and client device, and the client's callback preferences including medium preferences and client device preferences, communicates the status information to the communication center presence software, and the communication center presence software integrates the received status information and provides the integrated result to the agents of the communication center.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the network is a data-packet-network.

3. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the data-packet-network is the Internet network.

4. (Original) The system of claim 3, wherein the communication center markets products and or service to the clients.

5. (Original) The system of claim 4, wherein the agents are human resources employed by the communication center.
6. (Previously presented) The system of claim 4, wherein the agents are automated systems implemented in hardware and software at the communications center.
7. (Canceled)
8. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein an alert is propagated to clients.
9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the alert indicates one or more of status of the communication center, including one or more of the number of calls in queue and the estimated waiting time, and a time for callback, enabling the client to plan or to initiate a call with high probability of success.
10. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein optional callback or alert mediums include cellular, IP, and wired communications mediums.
11. (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the optional callback or alert devices include cellular telephones, pagers, telephones, computer stations, handheld computers, and laptop computers.
12. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the client-status information provided to an agent automatically updates periodically.
13. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the client-status information is continually streamed to the subscribing agent-user during a session with a client.
14. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the transfer of client-status information is

by instant messaging technology.

15. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the customer presence software executing at the client devices for monitoring client and device status is provided by a host of the communication center, and the communication-center presence software executing in the communication center communicates directly with the customer presence software executing at the client device.

16. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein one or more instances of customer presence service software are provided by a third-party presence service provider, and further comprising a presence service server operating in the network and communicating with both the instances of the presence service software and the communication center presence software executing at the communication center.

17. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the network is one or a combination of the Internet network, a wireless cellular telephone network, or a public service telephone network.

18. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein one or more instances of the customer presence software are provided by the communication center host, and one or more instances are provided by a third party presence service provider, and wherein two or more client devices executing presence software are associated with a single client, the communication center presence software providing thereby regularly updated and integrated presence status over the multiple devices for the single client.

19. (Previously presented) A method for enabling agent-users of a communication center connected to a network to obtain real-time client-presence status information related to clients of the information-source facility comprising the steps of:

(a) executing presence software at client devices used by the clients;

(b) communicating client-status information by the presence software, including on-line/off-line status of the client and client device, and the client's callback preferences including medium preferences and client device preferences to a communication center presence software executing in the communication center; and

(c) integrating the client-status information or a portion thereof and serving the result to subscribing agent workstations in the communication center.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the method is practiced over a data-packet-network.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the data-packet-network is the Internet network.

22. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the communication center markets products and or services to the clients.

23. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein in step (a), the presence software executing at a client device is provided by a third-party service provider, and client status information is communicated through a third party server to the communication center presence software.

24. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein in step (a), the presence software executing at a client device is provided by the host of the communication center, and the communication center presence software communicates directly with the client presence software.

25. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein in step (b), the communication center presence software operates in a call-waiting queue of the communication center.

26. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein in step (b), the client-status information is communicated in the form of instant messages containing the information.

27. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein in step (b), the client-status information is communicated through an electronic information page.

28. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein in step (b), on-line/off-line status information is communicated in the form of instant messages containing the information, and callback preference information is communicated through an electronic information page.

29. (Original) The method of claim 19 further comprising a step for alerting clients as to an estimated time of response from agent in a callback situation.

30. (Original) The method of claim 19 further comprising a step for alerting clients as to status of the communication center, including one or more of the number of calls in queue and the estimated waiting time, enabling the client to plan or to initiate a call with high probability of success.

31. (Original) The method of claim 29 wherein the alert is of the form of one of a page to a paging device, an instant message, an e-mail, or a telephone beep.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein in step (c), the client-status information automatically updates periodically during a client session.